



STATE OF WASHINGTON

WASHINGTON WORKFIRST

- *Office of Financial Management*
- *Department of Social and Health Services*
- *Employment Security Department*
- *Department of Community, Trade & Economic Development*
- *State Board for Community and Technical Colleges*
- *Department of Early Learning*

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WorkFirst Holds Parents Accountable

OLYMPIA – Tomorrow, March 1, WorkFirst will stop providing cash assistance to families who have repeatedly refused to participate in job readiness activities. WorkFirst is the state's temporary assistance program designed to provide low-income families with the supports they need to become self-sufficient.

WorkFirst encourages shared responsibility between the state and families by providing the supports parents need to go to work and requiring that parents take advantage of those resources to earn their self-sufficiency. The Non-Compliance Sanction, as the termination of cash assistance is called, encourages parents to engage in the program and holds them accountable.

The number of families on welfare in Washington is nearing record lows, with the majority of WorkFirst parents finding jobs and exiting the program within three months. Only a small number of families who refused to participate in WorkFirst activities for six consecutive months will lose their cash grant under the new policy. These families will continue to receive food and medical benefits.

WorkFirst continues to be a model program in helping families go to work so they can become self-sufficient. Work is not just a way to break the cycle of poverty; it gives families dignity and hope.

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